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Coping with the Currents of Change : A Frontier Bugis Settlement in Johor, Malaysia

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I Introduction

This paper aims at delineating the changes occurring among the descendants of Bugis migrants at a community on the southern tip of the Malay Peninsula. The area was covered with *kanji siris* (mud) and *gambut dalam* (peat). Like the other tropical lowland, the land development there was left untouched until the time when the first pioneers settled along the riverbank of the area towards the end of the nineteenth century. The first part of this paper (Section II) mainly deals with macro-changes observed in the State of Johor in Malaysia and the vicinity of the studied area in order to give a general image for a frontier development. The latter part, Sections III, IV and V focuses on changes experienced by the people in the community mainly based on interviews, survey results and observations.

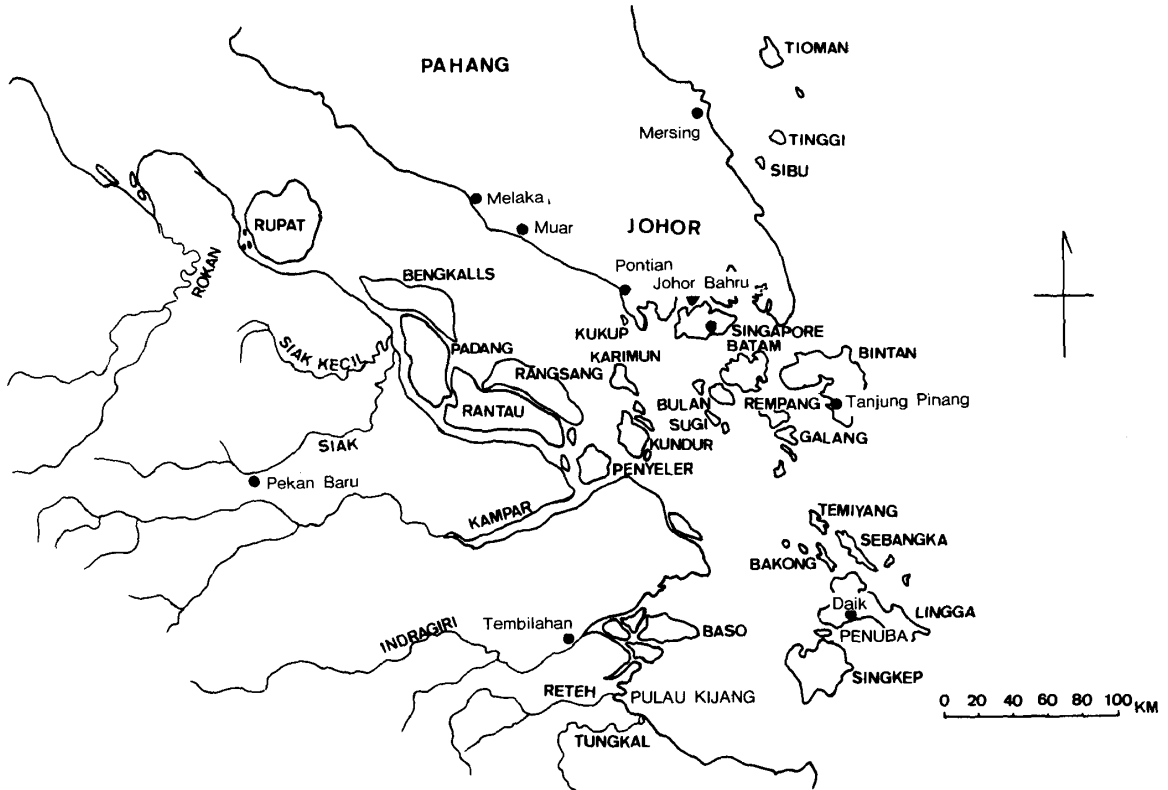
Field work was conducted as part of the Team Research Project "Socio-Economic Changes and Cultural Transformations in Rural Malaysia."¹⁾ Within this wide framework of research, I selected the research site according to the following three criteria: a community of small population size which I could handle individually; a community of Bugis descendants to which I could relate my past research experiences in South Sulawesi, Riau and Melaka. Both factors would be helpful for this rather short term research. Furthermore, in response to the critique that Japanese scholars always study rice-growing regions, I decided to choose a non rice-growing community in Johor. Thus, with the helps of my Malaysian colleagues, the Mukim (subdistrict) Sungai Karang, Daerah (district)

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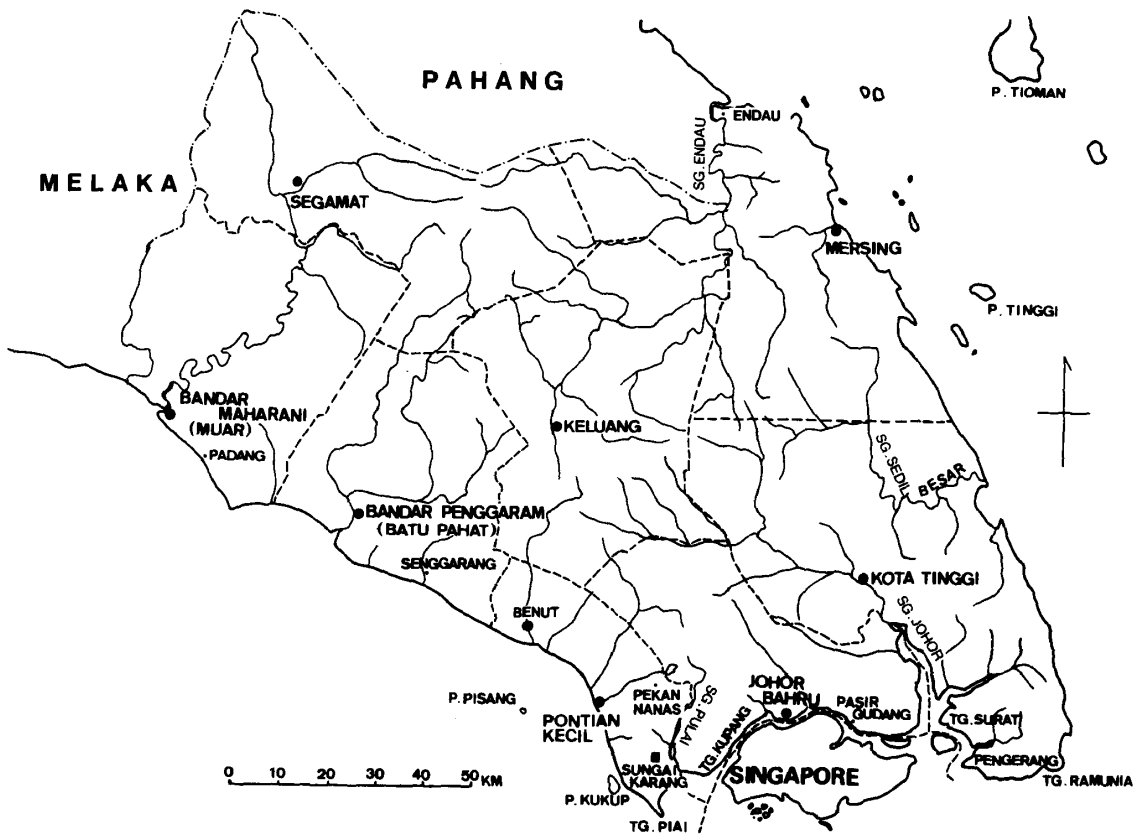
1) This project was under the auspices of the Vice-Chancellors Council of Malaysia and the Japanese Society for the Promotion of Science, jointly sponsored by Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia and the Center for Southeast Asian Studies of Kyoto University. I thank each of these organizations and officers for their support.

The field work was made possible by grants from the Hitachi Foundation and the Ministry of Education, Science and Culture, Japan. I owe a lot of stimulating dialogues with the two project leaders, Shamsul A. B. and T. Kato, and the other participants of the project: Azizah Kassim, Mohd. Salleh Lamry, Norhalim Hj Ibrahim, Ramli Mohamed, and T. Sekimoto. In Kuala Lumpur I am indebted to Prof. Syed Husin Ali for his insights and encouragement. Wendy Smith helped in correcting the English of the manuscript. In the Bangi seminar held in September, 1989, Prof. Mohd. Taib Osman made valuable comments on this original draft. I am grateful to him for having the trouble to read through.

The paper had been completed in 1989 for a publication to report the project. Owing to its unavoidable delay, the paper appears here with some modifications, mainly based on the referees' comments for this journal.



Map 1 The Melaka Straits and Islands



Map 2 Johor: Administrative Divisions

Pontian, Negeri (state) Johor Darul Takzim, was selected as the research site.²⁾ (see Maps 1 and 2)

II Frontier Settlement

II. i. *Johor and Its Settlements*

The ancient history of Johor is not clearly known. The old Javanese text *Nagarakertagama* composed in 1365 mentions Ujong Medini, that is, Land's End, along with Muar (north-west of the Johor State), Tumasik (Singapore), and Pahang (a northern state to Johor) [Winstedt 1932=1979: 3; Pigeaud 1960]. In the Malay Annals (*Sejarah Melayu*), Muar and Batu Pahat are mentioned: On the way from Singapore to Melaka, Sultan Iskandar Shah (Raja Iskandar) took up temporary abode in Muar leaving his minister at Sening Ujong [Brown 1953=1970: 42]; during the time of Sultan Muzaffar Shah the Siamese attacked Melaka and the Siamese fleet stopped at Batu Pahat where they dug a well [*ibid.*: 59].

After Melaka fell to the Portuguese in 1511, the capitals of succeeding sultans were frequently moved: at first the capital was located along the Johor River until its destruction by Jambi in 1673; at Riau in 1679–1688; at Kota Tinggi in 1688–1719; then at Riau again in 1709–1716; at Johor in 1716–1719. By 1719 Johor and Riau were abandoned and three foci of power emerged: in Terengganu and Pahang under the legitimate Sultan of Johor; in Siak, Bengkalis and Batu Bahara under the Minangkabau Raja Kecil; and in Selangor, Kelang and Linggi under the Bugis Daeng Marewa [Andaya 1975: 285]. From this time onwards, wars and piracy were rampant on the stage of the island world from Sumatra to the Malay Peninsula (see Map 1). Andaya concludes his book by saying “The Kingdom of Johor in the second decade of the eighteenth century saw but the beginning of a centrifugal tendency in the Malay world which continued throughout the eighteenth century and culminated in the permanent divisions wrought by the Anglo-Dutch Treaty of 1824” [*ibid.*: 321]. “With the Buginese firmly ensconced in Riau-Johor, Selangor, and Linggi, and with the Minangkabaus occupying an equally dominant position on the east coast of Sumatra and in areas of present-day Negeri Sembilan, the affairs of the once proud and prestigious Malay kingdom of Johor

2) The first fieldwork was conducted for less than one month in September and October, 1987. During this time I lived in the *penghulu* (*mukim* head) complex (Penghulu M. Amin kindly allowed me to stay with him), gathering general data through interviews. A preliminary testing of questionnaires was also done towards the end of the stay. From December 1988 to January 1989, I stayed with the *ketua* (headman) *kawasan* at Kg Sg Buloh Kasap whose house is situated in the middle of the Kawasan I. During this period of some fifty days, I spent a week or so in Johor Bahru for archival work. I owe thanks to Dr. Shaharil Talib for his generous guidance and introduction to the Johor Archive (Arkib Negara Malaysia, Cawangan Selatan), where Mr. G. Alphonso and his staff were always most helpful to me.

I am indebted to the villagers of the Kawasan for their cooperation during interviewing and for their hospitality and warmth. I would like to acknowledge my gratitude to Raja Uda bin Raja Abdul Rahman and his family for their willingness to share their daily lives with me; to Mr. Abd. Halim bin Hj Payoh, who was my most reliable field teacher as he, a nephew of Hj Bambang, knows the history of the community and genealogies of its members; and finally to Mr. Muhamad Amin bin Hassan and Mr. Nawawi bin Hj Awang, the two Penghulu of the Mukim Sg Karang, and Tuan Hj Ayub bin Meon, the District Officer of Pontian.

were now in the hands of non-Malays who continued to influence the course of events in the Malay world for the greater part of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries" [*ibid.* : 323].

It can be said that after the fall of Melaka, there were no permanent, substantial capitals in the Johor-Riau-Lingga-Pahang kingdom and that the land beyond the sphere of sultans was left uncultivated. Johor in the nineteenth century was an example of this. But the British acquisition of Singapore and its further development certainly effected the political structure of these kingdoms. Raffles contracted a treaty with the *de facto* ruler of Singapore (Temenggung Abdul Rahman) and had the rightful sultan of Johor (Sultan Husain Muhammad Shah) installed as a *de jure* sovereign with a pension from the British, in order to counteract legitimate claims to Singapore by the Sultan Abdul Rahman Muazzam Shah of Riau-Lingga on the Dutch side. The Anglo-Dutch treaty of 1824 finally divided the Malay world into two with no "attention to the importance of the local interests involved" [Mills 1961: 86]. The Karimun Islands, which were "indisputably a possession of the Temenggong," went laid under the control of the Dutch. On the Dutch side the Sultanate of Riau-Lingga was abolished in 1911 by the Dutch. On the British side, after Sultan Husain's death, Sultan Ali Iskandar Shah, residing in Muar, was nominally installed as the Sultan of Singapore until his demise in 1877 at Melaka. The Temenggung of Johor who resided in Telok Belangga in Singapore actually assumed suzerainty over Johor along with the title of 'Sultan' which had been used by Maharaja Abu Bakar since 1885, in the same way as Bendahara Wan Ahmad became Sultan Ahmad Mu'azzam Shah in Pahang in 1884. Although Johor Bahru was formally proclaimed as the capital in 1866, it was not until 1889 that the Sultan left Singapore [Ahmad Fawzi 1988: 39].

According to Newbold's descriptions the Temenggung of Muar ruled Muar and Segamat in 1839. Padang, with some 200 inhabitants, was under Datok Datok Kaya Padang. The penghulu of Batu Pahat extended his command from Parit as Pinang Seribu to the Batu Pahat River. Benut was under a penghulu, as was Pontian. (Although Newbold did not mention the names of penghulu, the penghulu of Pontian could be Abdul Manas bin Darum, a Bugis who was appointed as a penghulu in 1835. See Halimah [1981: 15].) The village of Polais (Pulai), near Pontian, with some one hundred inhabitants, was under a chief, Raja Semat. The command of the Temenggung of Singapore, who was, like the chiefs just mentioned, a vassal of Johor, extended from Polais to Point Ramunia (Tanjung Sepang nearby Teluk Ramunia) and to the Sedili River on the east coast [Newbold 1839=1971, vol. 2: 43]. Newbold estimated the population of Johor as 25,000 in the 1830's, although Begbie estimated the maritime Malay population in Johor as 1,000 a few years previously [Begbie 1834=1967: 270ff]. These estimates may be too low [Dodge 1980: 439], but we can imagine the scarcity of population at that time against the present population of one and a half million. On the other hand, the population of Bintan, where the Dutch Residency of Riau was stationed, was estimated at 42,000 and that of Lingga, 24,000 by Begbie [1834=1967: 270ff]. The main products from Johor were ivory, gold, tin, ebony, aguala (eaglewood), sappanwood, lakka (lac) and sandalwood [Newbold 1839=1971, vol. 2: 54]. But ever since the occupation of the island of Singapore by Raffles in 1819, modern Johor, Singapore's nearest neighbor, has depended for its development on the wealth and enterprise of the Singapore Chinese [Swettenham 1948: vii, also see Trocki 1979: 211]. Especially in the 1840's, Chinese pioneer planters flowed from Singapore to Johor, although

the incursion began between 1835 and 1840 [Blythe 1953: 3].³⁾

After obtaining permission in a form of *surat sungai* (river documents) from the Temenggung they opened up land along the rivers, under the *kangchu* (lord of the river, that is, the Chinese headman who received a grant from the Temenggung) system, planting gambir and pepper. The first permission (*surat sungai*) recorded is in 1844 [Trocki 1975: 346]. However their sole object being to make money as readily as possible, the Chinese made no attempt to manure the soil, and in a few years exhausted its richness [Mills 1961: 221]. Before these developments, inland areas were virtually uninhabited except for scattered Orang Asli indigenous groups, some of whom were engaged in extracting forest products like gutta percha (the latex of *Plaquium gutta*), rattans, jelutong (*Dyera*), dammar and so on.

Chinese *kangkar* (river foot, a large house near the mouth of the river to administer the plantation) had always been present in southern Johor, particularly along the rivers flowing into the Johor Strait. However, along the west coast, the mangrove-fronted, swamp-backed coast between Kukup and Batu Pahat inhibited penetration into the interior, and thus the main concentration of land-opening activities were along the Muar and Batu Pahat river systems [Jackson 1968: 28].

In the mid 19th century, there were only three categories of Malays in Johor [Logan 1847: 286]: a) *penghulu* (a headman) and *jinang* (a chief) who controled the riverine trade in upstream forest products extracted by the Orang Asli, b) the Malays of Johor, having some connections in Singapore especially from Telok Belanga, and c) other Malays. There were no roads and transportation was largely by boat or ship. In 1866, the Temenggung Abu Bakar established customs stations at Johor Bahru, Pendas, Kukup, Batu Pahat, Tanjung Surat, and Pengerang for the convenience of the gambir and pepper planters [Winstedt 1979: 108]. By 1873 police stations (*rumah pasung*) were situated in estuaries or capes strategic to seabound communication: Tg (abb. of *tanjung*, a cape) Surat, Pengerang, Kota Tinggi, Sg (abb. of *sungai*, river) Seluang, Pasir Gudang, Tg Kupang, Tg Kukup, Batu Pahat, Padang, Muar, Pulau Tinggi and Endau. A system of Residents was also instituted in 13 areas to control the export of forest products, gambir and pepper at river-mouths: Tg Surat, Pengerang, Sedeli, Johor Lama, Pasir Gudang, Tg Kupang, Senggerang, Batu Pahat, Padang, Muar, Tg Bulas, Linggi, and Endau [Ahmad Fawzi 1988: 41, 57].

The majority of the population are migrants from outside the Peninsula such as from China and India as well as from Singapore and the Netherlands East Indies including non-native 'Malays'. Thus, except for certain coastal areas, Johor was a frontier opened up by migrants. Around 1890 the Chinese totalled 150,000 out of a total population of 200,000 in Johor. Previous to this the Johor population was reported as 100,000 in 1880, 78,000 in 1868, and 25,000 in 1838 [Fawzi and Hasrom 1978: 29]. In 1894, Lake estimates the Chinese population as 210,000, the Malays as 50,000, Javanese, Bugis, Siamese and "natives" of the Malay Archipelago as 30,000, and natives of India, Arabs, Eurasians, and Europeans as 10,000 [Lake 1894: 296]. At the lecture given by Lake in 1894 in London, Dato Abdul Rahman commented that there was a Roman Catholic church at

3) Datuk Bentara Luar noted that the Chinese had been entering Johor to find themselves a livelihood since 1846 [Sweeney 1980: 82].

Pontian Besar [*ibid.* : 299]. This 'international' nature of Johor was still retained in 1911. At that time Johor had a population of 180,412, heavily dominated by males (see Table 1). In the early part of the 20th century the population growth of Johor has been conspicuous: increasing 56.4% from 1911 to 1921, 79% from 1921 to 1931 and 46.1% from 1931 to 1947, in which year the population was 738,251 [Del Tufo 1949: 39]. These rates of growth are much higher than in other parts of the Malay Peninsula and Singapore.

Table 1 Population of Johor, 1911

	Male	Female	Total	%
Pure Malays	35,760	35,555	71,315	39.5
Javanese	19,340	11,564	30,904	17.1
Chinese	56,781	6,624	63,405	35.2
Indians	4,755	904	5,659	3.1
Others*	5,493	3,636	9,129	5.1
Total	122,129	58,283	180,412	100.0

Source: [J. A. R. 1911]

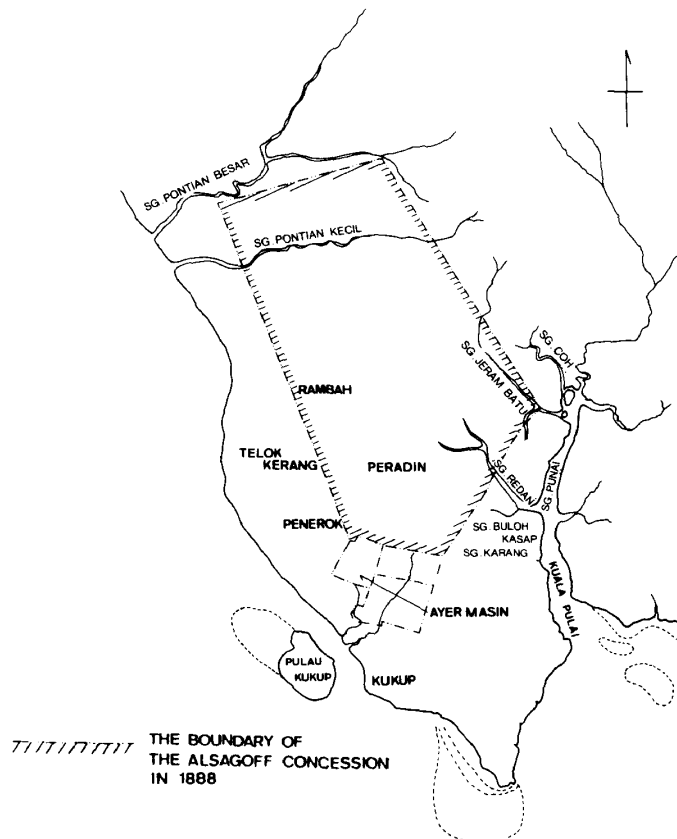
* Europeans 205 (161 British)

II. ii. *Kukup and Its Vicinity*

According to a contemporary report, Mohamed Ibrahim, on his voyage from Singapore to Melaka, went ashore at Tg Kupang near the mouth of the Pulai River in 1871. "There is a Johore police-station there in the Hon. Engku Abdul Rahman's [a brother of the Maharaja Abu Bakar] plantation, and the head of the guards is Enche' Abudul Samad of Telok Belanga. . . . The soil at Tanjong Kupang is reddish black and swampy, soft and full of crab-holes. It is not proper earth but a soil composed of leaves and so forth. . . . It is said that on the other side of the hill there are many Chinese who have plantations of pepper and gambir and who fell timber and make planks. The original inhabitants of the place no longer live there, only Javanese coolies and their overseer, a man from Telok Belanga. . . . All along the shore at Tg Kupang there is deep mud, because it was originally a mangrove forest, and has only recently been cleared and cultivated at the expence of the Hon. Engku Abdul Rahman. . . . there are three or four houses and one police station" [Sweeney and Phillips 1975: 3-4].

The kangchu-kangkar system of opening the land is concentrated in the southern part of Johor as mentioned above. Although the system was abolished in 1911, "it is hardly an exaggeration to state that there is no area in South Johore, i.e., in the Districts of Johore Bahru, Kukub [Kukup] and Kota Tinggi, which cannot be described by reference to the nearest kangkar" [Trocki 1979]. Near my research area, three surat sungai were issued in 1853, that is, at Tanjung Gelang Patah, Pulai Ulu and Coh [see Trocki 1975: appendix D], but there was no kangkar in the area itself. In 1878 a vast area of some 60,000 acres (equivalent to some 24,000 ha) in the southern part of the present

Pontian District was conceded to Syed Mohamad bin Ahmad bin Abdul Rahman Alsagoff, a Singapore-based Arab trader, by Sultan (then Maharaja) Abu Bakar [G. A. 253/1924]. Also a Chinese, Tan Eng Kwang, obtained two surat sungai in Kukup in 1878 and 1880. The Alsagoff concession was demarcated by “kiri mudek Sungei Permas” in the east, by “kanan mudek Sungei Pontian Besar” in the west, and up to the “kiri mudek Sungei Jeram Batu yang didalam Sungei Pulau” towards the inland near the mangrove area (see Map 3). The concession was effected by a Sultan’s letter, not by a surat sungai. So it did not confer kangchu rights on the holder, rather it was a land grant [*ibid.*]. The boundaries were not clear, and the area did not include fields already under cultivation by smallholders on the borderlines, land given to kangchu, and rivers and coastal areas which belonged to the State. From 1878 to 1895 Syed Mohamad had 2,000 acres cleared in Ayer Masin and Peneiro (Penerok), 300 acres cleared in Rambah, and 600 acres at Permas as well as 500 acres near the southern boundary. These areas were planted with gambir (*Uncaria gambir*), lada hitam (black pepper), pinang (areca nut palm), rumbiah (sago), coconut, rubber, coffee and pineapple [S.S. 145/1921]. According to an oral tradition in Pontian [Saadiah 1979: 77], the Alsagoff firm opened up the land in stages: at first they planted patchouli (*Pogostemon heyneanus*) which was popular in Penang, then coffee, thirdly sago, and finally rubber. Many of the concession lands were subleased. In 1906 the Peneiro Planting Syndicates obtained 5,035 acres from Syed Mohamad (rubber 935 acres, other crops 390 acres), and in 1922 the title was transferred to the



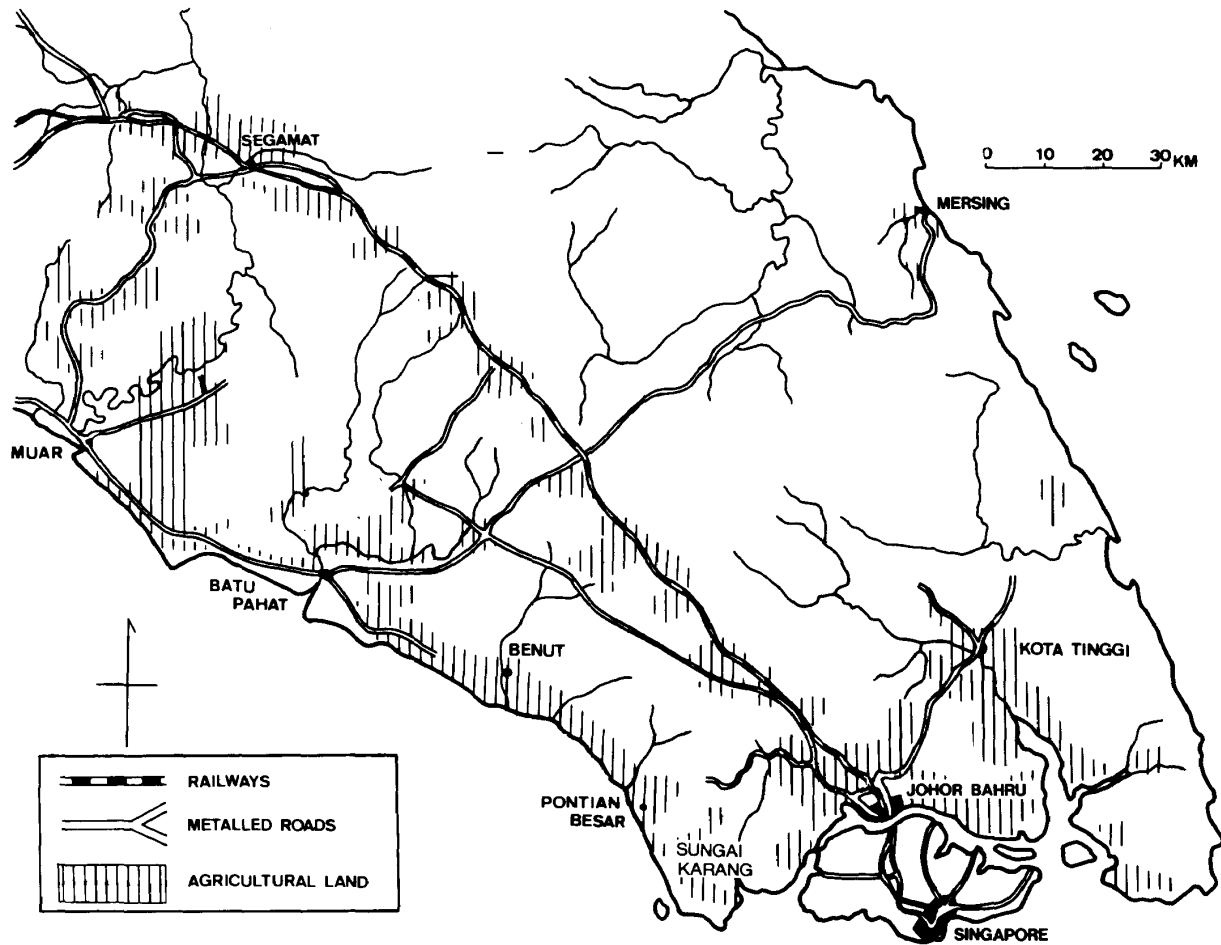
Map 3 The Alsagoff Concession [Saadiah 1979]

Roeboune Finance & Investment Co. which operated the Peradin Estate of some 800 acres. This estate was later transferred to Lim Kim Tian Ltd. and then to the Kok Ann Rubber Estate of Singapore who sold it to the present owner, Malacca Plantation Sdn., after oil palm had been planted around 1976, one of the earliest appearances of this crop in the area. To the north of Mukim Sg Karang, the Hevea Rubber Co. obtained a lease of 10,000 acres for 200 years in 1906. It is recorded that some areas were reserved for the penghulu of Sg Karang at the time [G.A. 70/1924]. In 1917, rubber trees were planted on only 70 acres of this area by the Hevea (Johore) Rubber Plantation. Gradually smallholders infiltrated into the concession area where no cultivation was being done by the title holders. For example, in 1924, there were 39 lots of smallholdings covering 131 acres within the area of the Peneiro Planting Syndicates. "They were taken up in 1916-17 against the will of the Peneiro Syndicates and the occupiers were originally squatters of the worst type" [*ibid.*]. The Alsagoff concession itself reverted to the government in 1926 after protracted negotiations with its receiver, and a new Land Office was set up at Kukup [J. A. R. 1926].

In addition to offering incentives to develop agricultural lands, the Constantinople Estate, the name given by Syed Mohamad for his enterprise, issued paper money similar to Wong Ah Fook on the eastern side of Johor. The notes indicate a monetary value in English, Jawi Malay, Chinese and Tamil. This clearly indicates that the estate had laborers of various ethnic origins or that there existed traders of such ethnicities. It recruited the labor force from the Middle East, Singapore, the Malay Peninsula and from Indonesia, using its money-lending business to pilgrims to recruit defaulters [Vredenburg 1962: 127-129]. Generally speaking 'Javanese' seemed to have been favored as laborers [Saadiah 1979; also Sukiman 1981].

Given the above circumstances, it was said to be "at present impossible to estimate the extent of land alienated or under cultivation in the State," [J.A.R. 1913] although the Land Enactment of 1910 was already executed. Map 4 shows the agricultural development of Johor in 1926. In Kukup practically no land (survey) work was attempted: "the thousands of small holdings must await settlement until a Collector is appointed to the District" [J.A.R. 1918].

We can gather an impression of how areas developed by observing place names in contemporary maps. In the map of Johor drawn by Dato Bintara Luar in 1907, on the west coast below Pontian Besar we see place names like Pontian Kecil, Rambah, Telok Kerang, Penerok, Serkat and Tanjung Bulos and a road connecting Pontian Besar to Kukup. On the western bank of the Pulai River below the Redan River, we notice place names are already appearing: Sg Tempayang, Sg Burong, Sg Senai, Sg Belokok, Peradin, Sg Punai, Kuala Redan, Sg Seligi, Sg Karang, Sg Boh, Sg Dinar, Sg Sam, Cokoh Kecil and Cokoh Besar. It seems that most of the present settlements had been already established by 1907 there. In 1924 Cowgill reports the parallel Chinese names of many settlements in Mukim Sg Karang: Sg Boh (Boh Kang), Sg Cengkeh (Tseng Kay Kang), Sg Karang (Ka Lang Kang), Sg Punai (Pung Nyi Kang), and Peradin (Pok Ah Ling) while on the west coast, where there are now many towns, only Pontian, Penerok, Telok Kerang, Rimba Terjun, Sg Rambah, Kukup were reported as having Chinese names. It is noteworthy that the first four are mentioned as '*kang*' (in Teochiu dialect, '*gang*' in the standard Chinese) which may be equivalent to '*pangkalan*' in Malay in these cases. '*Gang*' in standard Chinese means the branch of a river and a



Map 4 Johor in 1926 [Kirby 1927]

port. It can be assumed that before the construction of the Johor Bahru-Pontian road, the Pulai River was the most important means of access to the interior areas like Coh.

The population of Pontian-Kukup was 44,045 in 1931, just less than 10 percent of the total population in Johor. In Table 2 the Bugis, Sumatrans and Javanese are included in the category 'Malays'. The sex ratio is still not balanced. At Mukim Sg Karang the population already

Table 2 Population of Pontian (Kukup) and Johor, 1931

	Kukup			Johor		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Malays	14,800	13,034	27,834	125,905	109,144	235,049
Chinese	10,043	4,612	14,655	157,777	56,624	214,401
Indians	1,105	356	1,461	36,912	14,135	51,047
Europeans	14	1	15	500	219	719
Eurasians	4	5	9	152	138	290
Others	44	27	71	2,235	1,568	3,803
Total	26,010	18,035	44,045	323,481	181,828	505,309

Source: [J. A. R. 1931]

numbered 1,948 in 1927 [Daftar 1927]. Yet a letter to the Commissioner of Lands and Mines from the Collector of Land Revenue, Kukup, dated 26th May 1936, concerning the formation of a Malay reservation in the Mukim of Sungai Karang (Johore Malay Reservation Enactment was passed in 1936), says "The population is almost entirely Malay there being nothing to attract the Chinese or other races. Communications are bad and the soil is poor and much of the land has reverted to the state and has growing up in semak [shrubs] which harbours tigers and other pests. A large proportion flee back to the Netherland East Indies during the slump but some are now returning and raising money by unregistered pajak [tax] of the lands to Chinese by agreements which appear to be reasonable in most cases" [C.L.R. Kukup 636/1936]. In the sea around this area, the Lanuns and Malays were engaged in piracy, "a well known but somewhat misleading term" [Mills 1961: 255] in the early part of the 19th century. Pulau Kukup was notorious as a hide-out for pirates. "Especially feared by people [of Melaka] making their way to and from Singapore at that time [c. 1819] was the Kukup Strait for it was infested with pirates" [Hill 1955: 135]. After the Dutch-Anglo treaty, a British rear-admiral remarked that the very short distance between Pulau Pisang and Pulau Kukup on the Melaka shore and the Karimun Islands at the south of the Strait, over which the British had relinquished all control, gave great facility for "freebooters" to cross over from the latter [Tarling 1963: 50]. It seems that Orang Asli groups often moved the location of their activities and Logan reports that there were no Orang Benua along the Pulau River, although some occupied the upper branch of the river Pontian [Logan 1847: 246]. The Kalang, another group of Orang Asli, on the Pulau River, who were removed from Singapore by the Temenggung upon the cession of Singapore, were reduced to eight in number [*ibid.*: 300].

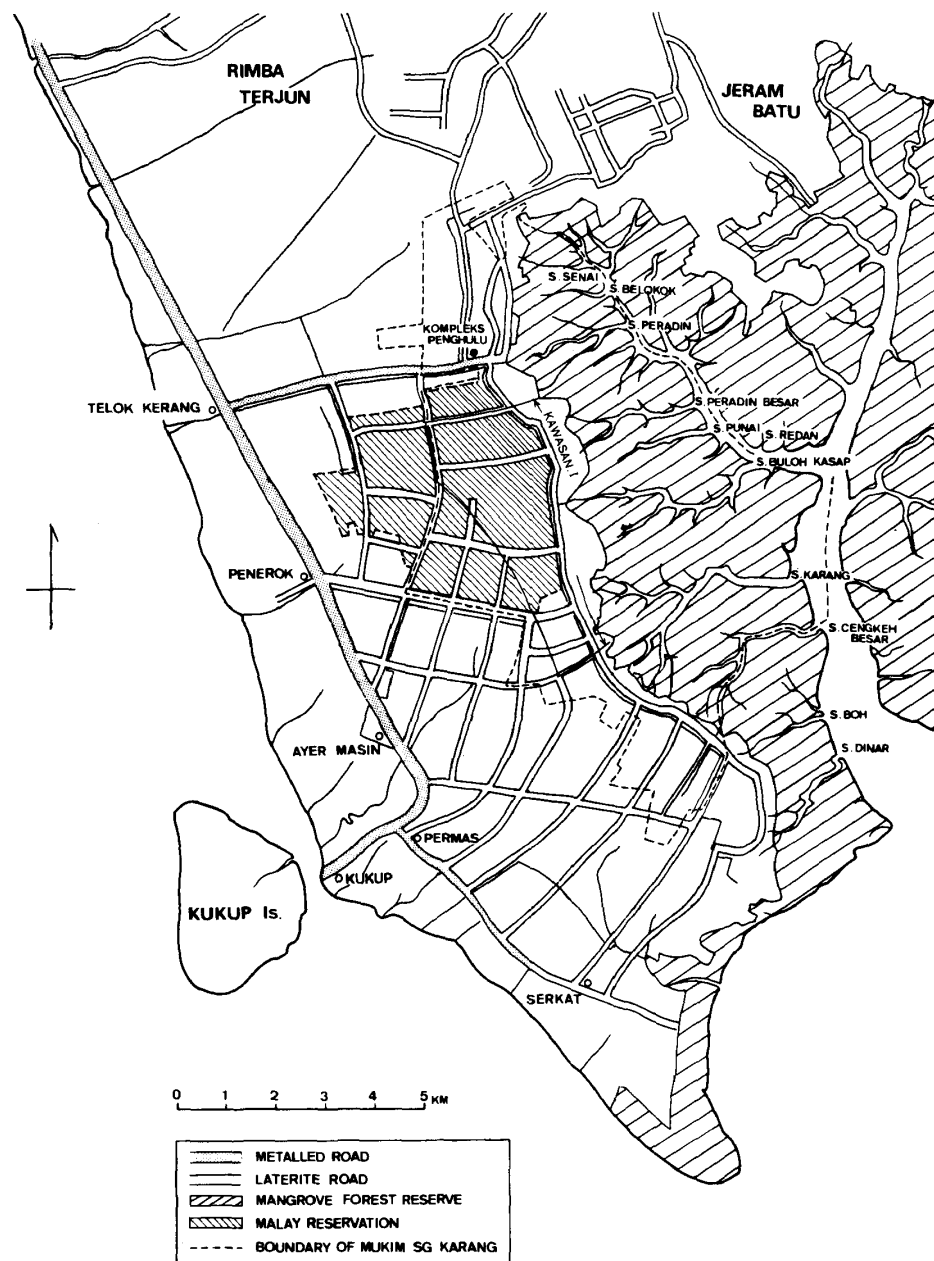
Agricultural development is observed in the latter part of the 19th century and the presence of the Alsagoff concession was an important stimulus to the opening up of land in this south-eastern tip of the Peninsula. In this process of agricultural development, the Bugis played a vital role in the vacuum areas left untouched by the concessions and kangkar, toward the end of the 19th century. At an earlier date the Bugis were pirates, but, according to Mills, from the evidence which is available it would seem that during the period of 1824 to 1867 the Bugis did not engage in piracy. Instead they devoted themselves to trade, and were the most important indigenous merchants in the whole of the East Indian Islands [Mills 1961: 266]. Actually the mother of Syed Mohamad Alsagoff was a daughter of the Gowa Sultan of South Sulawesi and herself a big business operator in Singapore [Saadiah 1979: 51].

II. iii. *Sg Karang and the Bugis*

The Mukim of Sg Karang is predominantly inhabited by descendants of the Bugis. In nearby mukim, there are predominantly Javanese settlements or villages made up of various ethnic groups such as Bugis, Javanese and Malays. However, a 'pure' Malay village is quite difficult to find in the Pontian district.

Earlier Bugis settlers who migrated into the Sungai Karang area and opened up uncultivated lands of peat were from the Dutch East Indies via Singapore and the Karimuns. One of their leaders, Wak Bambong bin Samerulah or Haji Bambung Daeng Marulak, was appointed as a penghulu

in 1899 [Daftar 1889–1926]. He was among the second batch of penghulu to be officially appointed, the first batch in the penghulu list being appointed in 1889 (1306 AH) in Kukup. A Malay, Ahmad bin Ali or Haji Ahmad bin Mohd Ali, was appointed as a penghulu in Sg Boh, that is, the present Kawasan III [Daftar 1927; Daftar 1934]. In 1927 the area of Mukim Sg Karang was recorded as stretching from Sg Cengkeh to Sg Senai (see Map 5). The Mukim had two penghulu and one *naib* (vice) penghulu, comprising villagers (*anak buahnya*) 1,948. The population was recorded as 1,374 at Sg Karang under Penghulu Hj Mohd Sah b. Hj Bambang and Naib Penghulu Abd. Latif bin Sampeh, and 574 at Sg Boh under Penghulu Ahmad bin Mohd Ali [Daftar 1927]. Sg Cengkeh now



Map 5 Mukim Sg Karang

belongs to Mukim Serkat. At one stage, the merging of Mukim Sg Karang with Ayer Masin was planned because of the scarcity of population, but the other factor, its vastness of area, seems to have prevented the merger. According to the official records, there were two penghulu in the Mukim for some time after 1910, although, according to the testimonies of present residents, Hj Ahmad remained as a naib penghulu (see Maeda [1988: Fig. 1] for a genealogy obtained from local informants). After his death in 1936, one penghulu administered the Mukim until 1987, when two penghulu were appointed (see Table 3).

The Mukim had six *kampung* in 1951 with their population as follows: 470 residents in Sg Karang, 181 in Simpang Kiri, 355 in Sg Boh, 430 in Peradin, 250 in Permas, 400 in Belokok, totaling 2,086 (see [PDPN 149/51: Table 4] for the population increase or discrepancy in 1952). In each kampung one ketua (headman) was appointed with an honorarium. One of them had been appointed as early as 1933. The six ketua kampung were reduced to three in 1962. In 1977 four present-day Kawasan were formed. Each kampung, in its original form, is named after a small riverine, or, more recently, a *parit* (canal), at the pangkalan (landing points) of which pioneers started the process of opening up land. The oldest kampung, Kg (abb. of kampung) Sg Karang in Kawasan I, was occupied by the Bugis from Wajo, one of the former kingdoms in South Sulawesi. Another of the older kampung, Sg Boh of Kawasan III, was founded by Wajo Bugis and Malays, originally from Singapore, as the second penghulu, Ahmad, is a Malay whose father migrated from Tg Kling, Singapore. Kg Peradin, Kg Belokok and Kg Sg Senai in Kawasan II were opened up shortly after that by the Bugis from Bone (another former kingdom in South Sulawesi), the Makassarese and the Chinese. This Kawasan is situated next to the Peradin Estate. Kawasan IV,

Table 3 Penghulu and Naib Penghulu in Mukim Sg Karang

Penghulu	Naib Penghulu
Hj Bambang b. Dg Marulak (1) (d. 1914) 1899–1914 Sg Karang	(Hj Abd. Kadir (Parewak) b. Hj Bambang) (2)
Hj Ahamd b. Mohd Ali (d. 1936) 1910–1936 Sg Boh	?
Hj Md Sah b. Hj Bambang (3) (d. 1946) 1922–1928	Abd. Latif b. Sampeh (4) (d. 1950) 1928–1931? Badwi b. Hj Bambang 1933?–1937
Hj Badwi b. Hj Bambang (5) (d. 1951) 1937–1951	Mohd Salleh b. Ahmad (d. 1970) 1937–? Abd. Kadir b. Badwi 1951–1953
Abd. Kadir b. Hj Badwi (6) 1953–1974	
Nawawi b. Hj Awang (7) 1974–	
Mohd Amin b. Mohd Hassan (8) 1987–	

Sources: [Daftar 1889–1926; Daftar 1927; Daftar 1934]; other files; interviews with the ex-Penghulu Abd. Kadir.

Note: The number in parenthesis is the order of pengkuluship assumed by the interviewees.

Table 4 Population by District, Pontian, 1952

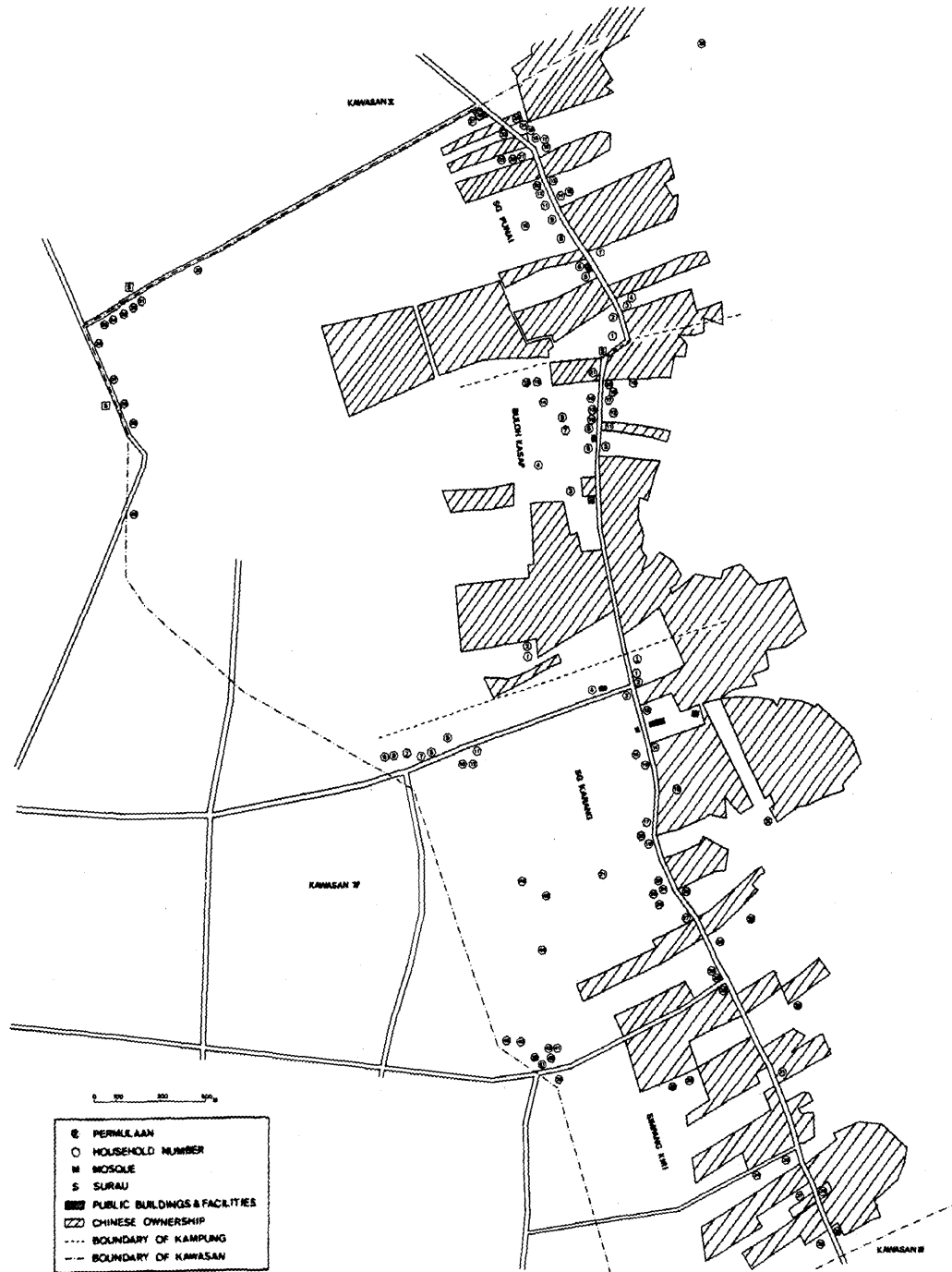
District	Malays	Other Malays	Chinese	Indians	Euro-peans	Eur-asians	Others	Total
Api-Api	10,516	1,144	4,612	156	0	0	14	16,442
Ayer Baloi	10,184	3,142	5,258	136	0	0	0	18,720
Ayer Masin	3,052	524	3,794	1,206	4	0	28	8,608
Jeram Batu	2,216	1,038	11,928	260	4	0	2	15,448
Pangkalan Raja	604	176	1,678	0	0	0	0	2,458
Pontian	9,558	2,130	11,302	424	4	6	86	23,510
Rimba Terjun	10,896	2,660	13,010	404	0	0	34	27,004
Serkat	8,596	1,134	3,432	32	0	0	0	13,194
Sg Karang	3,404	586	392	4	0	0	0	4,386
Sg Pinggan	2,264	4,142	3,986	130	0	0	2	10,524
Benut	3,086	12,682	4,008	112	2	8	4	19,902
Total	64,376	29,358	63,400	2,864	14	14	170	160,196

Source : [PDPN 49/52]

which separated from Kawasan I and III in 1977, is located inland and its villagers are Wajo Bugis and Javanese.

So we have a settlement pattern showing the concentration of people by places of origin and ethnicity. The pattern is largely decided by who settled first at each pangkalan. Within Kawasan I, three clusters of houses are geographically distinguished. The villagers subdivide it into as many as four or five 'kampung' [cf. Maeda 1988: 166], but on the southern side houses are built so contiguously that there seems to be no agreed boundary. In Kg Sg Punai, the kampung nearest to the Kawasan II, half of the residents are from Bone and related to members of Kg Peradin in that Kawasan. Especially houses along Parit Surau, which marks the borderline between the two Kawasan, are geographically and socially considered to be part of Kg Peradin. They have relatives in Pengerang in the eastern part of Johor where many Maros (north to Makassar) people reside. Most of the area of Kg Sg Punai along Parit Surau was included in a German estate which was deserted after World War I and cleared in the 1950's by the present residents. The residents in Kg Buloh Kasap and Kg Sg Karang are mostly Wajo Bugis who have more relatives on islands like Karimun than in the Bugis concentrated Benut and adjacent areas. They constitute the core circle of descendants from Hj Bambang, the first penghulu of this area. The cluster of Kg Sg Karang is divided into Sg Karang proper and Kg Sg Simpang Kiri. It should be noted that I am following local usage and using 'Sg Karang' on various levels: as the name of a kampung, a cluster of kampung, an official Kawasan, an official Mukim, and, sometimes, vaguely, as the area centered around the present Mukim. On the fringe of Kg Sg Simpang Kiri, adjacent to Kawasan III and IV, there are a few Javanese residents, especially at the west end of Kg Parit Baru, a small kampung of several houses near a rubber processing machine.

In this Kawasan only two Chinese households live in Kg Buloh Kasap and Kg Sg Karang.



Map 6 Kawasan I

There are a few deserted Chinese-style houses and one of them is occupied by a Bugis returnee. It seems that the Chinese settled firstly in Peradin and Belokok where the Germans had built a cemented wharf before World War I. Now there are four Chinese households there and they are regarded as original settlers along with the Bugis. During the Emergency, the Chinese in this

Mukim did not have any trouble, unlike in other areas.

After the construction of laterite roads in the 1980's, most residents prefer to build or rebuild their houses along a road because of the convenience of transportation. The introduction of new piped water and electricity supplies will spur this movement even nearer to roads due to the cost of extending the supply line. Many residents build their houses on their own land. Others build on land owned by relatives. Empty houses are used as a resting place for agricultural workers or a 'temporary residence' for new comers, who are mostly related to someone in the village.

II. iv. *Outline of the Community*

The Mukim of Sungai Karang (see Map 5), situated in the southwestern part of Johor, the Malay Peninsula, is adjacent to the Mukim of Serkat and Kukup on the south, to the Mukim of Ayer Masin on the west, while the District of Gelang Patah is beyond the Pulai River on the east. The area of the Mukim of Sg Karang is 5,962 ha, but more than a half of this is taken up with Mangrove Forest Reserve. The Mukim, or subdistrict, is divided into four Kawasan, areas or administrative divisions. Kawasan I (see Map 6) is said to be the oldest settlement in the Mukim and comprises several kampung, or clusters of houses or hamlets or villages: Kg Sg Karang, Kg Simpang Kiri, Kg Buloh Kasap, Kg Sg Punai, and so on.

Formerly the Pulai River and its branches were the only routes to approach Sg Karang. Now between Telok Kerang on the Pontian-Kukup main road and Belokok, the administrative center of the Mukim, is a newly tarred road. There are a network of laterite roads connecting the village to the Kukup-Pontian road or to Pekan Nanas on the Pontian-Johor Bahru trunk road. Thus the transportation of agricultural products is easily done by lorries in contrast with the much difficulties in the former days.

The population of the State of Johor is one and a half million (Table 5). Pontian is one of the eight districts in the State but its population is only 7.7% of the total. The ratio of females to males in Pontian, Muar and Batu Pahat is more than a hundred in contrast of other districts whose ratio is less than a hundred. The ethnic composition in Pontian shows more or less the same pattern as the State in general, but the percentage of Malays (62%) is slightly higher than the State average (55.5%).

Focusing within the District of Pontian itself, Table 4 shows the ethnic composition in 1952, according to a document during the Emergency period (1948-1960) [PDPN 49/52]. Jeram Batu and Pangkalan Raja are heavily dominated by the Chinese owing to the 'new village' policy of that time. Thus, in 1952 the population by ethnicity at Pekan Nanas was reported as 5,472 Chinese, 159 Malays and 85 Indians. Pontian, Rimba Terjun and Ayer Masin have attracted the Chinese population since they are urban or suburban areas. In other Mukim, the Malays dominate the population. The Malays at Mukim Sg Karang comprise 91% of the population, and over a period of 30 years the Chinese were reduced from 392 to 35 in number, that is, less than two percent in 1986 (Tables 4 and 6). The Indians present in 1952 (Table 4) could be the family of a shop owner. In 1989 there are no Indians except one Pakistani, formerly adopted by Penghulu Ahmad and married now to a Javanese descendant. Table 7 shows the number of households and their members for

Table 5 Population by Ethnic Group

	Malay			Chinese			Indian			Others			Total		
	M	F	Total	M	F	Total	M	F	Total	M	F	Total	M	F	Total
Batu Pahat	82,491	89,007	171,498	48,796	48,841	97,637	2,848	2,453	5,301	98	91	189	134,233	140,392	274,625
Johor Bahru	105,235	100,850	206,085	82,469	79,146	161,615	19,854	18,102	37,956	631	584	1,215	208,189	198,682	406,871
Keluang	40,825	38,428	79,253	38,817	38,321	77,138	11,768	11,284	23,052	173	175	348	91,583	88,208	179,791
Kota Tinggi	48,069	43,622	91,691	9,201	8,382	17,583	2,654	2,300	4,954	20	19	39	59,944	54,323	114,267
Mersing	15,471	14,883	30,354	5,656	4,891	10,547	709	502	1,211	50	46	96	21,886	20,322	42,208
Muar	77,323	84,409	161,732	58,518	59,539	118,057	5,586	5,437	11,023	158	159	317	141,585	149,544	291,129
Pontian	36,432	38,694	75,126	22,280	22,239	44,519	725	606	1,331	32	23	55	59,469	61,562	121,031
Segamat	30,492	30,887	61,379	35,482	35,454	70,936	9,221	8,844	18,065	58	63	121	75,253	75,248	150,501
Total	436,338	440,780	877,118	301,219	296,813	598,032	53,365	49,528	102,893	1,220	1,160	2,380	792,142	788,281	1,580,423

M: male F: female

Source: 1980 Census

Table 6 Population and Number of Households by Kawasan, Mukim Sg Karang

Kawasan	Population	Households	Average Members
I	363 (4)	84 (1)	4.32
II	502 (21)	113 (3)	4.44
III	367 (9)	62 (1)	5.92
IV	633 (1)	117 (1)	5.41
Total	1,865 (35)	376 (6)	4.96

Source: SERU 1986 Maklumat Kampung

Note: The number in parenthesis shows Chinese population and household number.

Table 7 Number of Households and Population by Kampung, Kawasan I

	Households	Male	Female	Total	Average members
Sg Karang*	43	99	106	205	4.77
Buloh Kasap	22	45	53	98	4.45
Sg Punai	40	116	109	225	5.63
Total	105	260	268	528	5.03

Source: 1988/9 Survey

* includes Simpang Kiri.

each cluster of houses, from my own household survey conducted together with Abd. Halim bin Hj Payoh. The results differ from the SERU (Socio-Economic Research Unit) survey in which the number of households is reported as 84 and the population, 363 [see Maeda 1988: 166]. A detailed breakdown of the population by sex and age is shown in Table 8.

Because the total area of the Mukim, some 6,000 ha, is mostly covered with mangrove forests,

Table 8 Population by Sex, Age and Kampung, Kawasan I

Age	Male				Female				Total
	SK	BK	SP	Total	SK	BK	SP	Total	
0-4	12	7	16	35	13	9	9	31	66
5-9	10	3	12	25	11	6	12	29	54
10-14	8	1	9	18	7	4	12	23	41
15-19	10	3	7	20	17	1	16	34	54
20-24	6	3	12	21	7	4	8	19	40
25-29	10	5	9	24	1	7	6	14	38
30-34	6	3	9	18	6	2	6	14	32
35-39	6	2	7	15	10	1	4	15	30
40-44	5	4	2	11	6	2	9	17	28
45-49	5	1	5	11	2	3	4	9	20
50-54	3	5	6	14	4	3	9	16	30
55-59	4	2	5	11	6	2	5	13	24
60-64	2	3	8	13	6	1	5	12	25
65-69	6	1	6	13	4	0	2	6	19
70-74	3	1	2	6	2	4	1	7	13
75-79	2	1	1	4	2	2	0	4	8
80-	1	0	0	1	2	2	1	5	6
Total	99	45	116	260	106	53	109	268	528

Source: 1988/9 Survey

SK: Sg Karang and Simpang Kiri; BK: Buloh Kasap; SP: Sungai Punai

Table 9 Area under Cultivation in Mukim Sg Karang

Crop	Area (ha)
Rubber	852
Coconut palm	257
Oil palm	327
Coffee	36
Pineapple	159
Banana	6
Orchard	3
Coco	1
Vegetable	3
Total	1,644

Source: Penghulu's Office, 1988

the agricultural land is less than 2,000 ha (see Table 9). Economic activity is mainly in the form of small holdings of rubber, oil palm, coconut and pineapple, as well as small-scale fisheries along the riverines branching off from Sg Pulai. Mangrove trees are exported also. Among household members there are also factory workers and wage earners commuting outside the Mukim. Quite a

number of females work at an electronic components factory between Pontian and Pekan Nanas. There are also laborers under "contracts": those working on estates under contract to Chinese landowners or Malay superintendants, and those under contract to persons who obtain public tenders for development projects. Absentee landownership prevails but conspicuous stratification is hardly observed among the village residents except in the case of landless laborers newly migrated from the outside.

III Marriage, Household and Migration

Ethnicity in a frontier context is preserved by ethnic endogamy, and, apart from differences in dress, language or religion, kinship plays an important role in defining ethnic boundaries however they may come to be objectively blurred. There are scattered cases of first-cousin marriage which, as a preferred form of marriage, is characteristically found with high incidence among some communities of the Bugis in South Sulawesi [Maeda 1973]. Marriages between close kin are not so frequent but ethnic endogamy seem to have been preferred by the Sg Karang Bugis in the past. In one sense, the ethnic circle substitutes for the kinship circle in frontier situations, owing to the lack of proper partners within the latter. From genealogies, a tendency of marriage between partners originating from the same locality can be observed. The Wajo people marry Wajo and the Bone, Bone. Otherwise Bugis look for a partner from anywhere in South Sulawesi. Partners were, then, sought in other Bugis dominant areas like Benut, Karimun or Kundur where one may have a relative who knows other villagers. To a certain extent the majority of those in the village studied looked for a spouse from among co-villagers. The resulting pattern is one of endogamy among the Wajo. Statistically Wajo couples dominate couples from different localities. On the other hand it is also true that there are quite a number of intermarriages. Out of the 105 living couples, cases of intermarriage among Bugis are 19: 7 cases of a Bugis husband with a Malay wife, 4 Malay-Bugis, 2 Bugis-Javanese, 2 Javanese-Bugis, 1 Banjarese-Bugis, 1 Sumbawa-Bugis, 1 Makassarese-Bugis, and 1 Bugis-Makassarese. The other ethnic marriages are Javanese-Javanese, Javanese-Malay, Pakistani-Javanese, Banjarese-Javanese and Malay-Banjarese, one case each. This means that 81 out of the 105 cases are marriages among the Bugis themselves, mostly Bugis from Wajo and Bone, sporadically from Soppeng, Rappang and Buton. However this calculation of ethnic identity could not be completely reliable or objective, because many Bugis or Javanese or Banjarese are the offspring of mixed marriages in former generations. For example SK 36 (house number of Kawasan I): the couple was born in Sg Karang; the husband's father migrated from Buton but died in Sg Karang; his mother was born in Singapore and her father was from Bone; the wife's father was a villager of Sg Karang, a descendant from Wajo; her mother was a Bintan Malay. Her two brothers are living in this village (SK 8 and SK 38).

Some inter-ethnic marriage partners come from distant places like Kelang (Selangor), Langkawi (Kedah) or Bangkinan (in Sumatra), but only 12 spouses among them are from outside the Mukim. In fact a total of 35 husbands and 37 wives married into the village from outside (see Table 10). This indicates the fact that ethnic endogamy is not necessarily confined to the choice of partners

Table 10 Place of Origin of Married Couples in Kawasan I

		Wife's Original Place									Hus- bands
		Mukim Sg Karang	Neaby Mukim	Pontian	Johor State	S'pore	Malaysia	Sumatra	Sulawesi	Sumbawa	
H u s b a n d	Mukim Sg Karang	44	8	9	4	1	1	3	0	0	70
	Nearby Mukim ¹⁾	4	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	5
	Pontian ²⁾	3	0	3	1	0	0	1	0	0	8
	Johor State ³⁾	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
	Singapore	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	2
	Malaysia ⁴⁾	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
	Sumatra ⁵⁾	7	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	9
	Sulawesi ⁶⁾	4	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	6
	Sumbawa	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Total of Wives		68	8	13	6	1	1	7	1	0	105

N=105 couples, out of 103 households (=519 persons) excluding the Chinese.

Source: 1988/9 Survey

Notes: 1) Penerok, Pernas, Serkat Kukup, Sg Chengkeh, Sg Sam, Sg Moleh, Jeram, Pulau, Sg Tempayang.

2) Pontian, Benut, Ayer Baloi, Api-Api, Sanglang.

3) Muar, Batu Pahat, Johor Lama, Gelang Patah.

4) Selangor, Langkawi.

5) Tg Batu, Tungkal, Indragiri, Tg Balai, Bangkinan, Medan.

6) Wajo, Bone, Soppeng, Luwu.

from within the village.

Let us take an example of a core kinship circle. Hj Bambang, the first penghulu, had two other brothers, Hj Kecah and Hj Payoh. Five of the grandchildren of Hj Kecah live on the islands of Kundur and Batam (both in Indonesia) and one lives in Johor Bahru. As they have inherited land in Sg Karang, one of them often comes back to the kampung. Hj Bambang's youngest brother Hj Payoh, died at Bintan in 1932. He married three times, but only two children were born to the second wife. His daughter married a son of Hj Bambang (that is, father's brother's daughter marriage) but they were subsequently divorced without offspring. Her children by another husband live in Tg Batu, Karimun. Hj Payoh's son who is now in Sg Karang was reared by a granddaughter of Hj Bambang, who was married to the Penghulu Abd. Latif. Hj Bambang himself left three daughters and five sons. Two sons died, one in Mecca and one in Bintan, but the others lived in Sg Karang. Now only four granddaughters of Hj Bambang, all of them over fifty years old, stay in the village. Two grandsons are still alive in Pontian and Johor Bahru. There are 15 (8 males and 7 females) fourth generation offspring from Hj Bambang's brothers living in the village. Some of the fifth generation remain unmarried, and live there with their parents, while three divorcees, two males with children and one without a child, live in the village. Many more have left the village to marry or to seek employment.

This core kin circle of Hj Bambang does not show much of a tendency for near-kin marriage. One reason is that many members of the second and third generation dispersed, especially to the islands in the Melaka Straits and members of the fourth generation moved onwards to Pontian, Johor Bahru and Singapore. Another reason is because the researcher was not able to trace all marriages; many males practised polygyny and these marriages were not necessarily remembered or reported, especially if there were no descendants or the marriage was contracted outside the community.

Yet we may presume that the villagers tended to expand their kin networks rather than to protect kin-circle identity or property. In the sample of 105 marriages in Sg Karang, only seven cases of first cousin marriage are reported: two mother's sister's daughter, three mother's brother's daughter and two father's brother's daughter. All of these peoples were marrying for the first time. There are six cases of marriage between second cousin. Third cousin marriages number seven. Five couples reported that they were distantly related and another pair claimed to be fourth cousins. Thus marriages between relatives amount to around 25%. Of these, 21 males and 22 females are married for the first time. This percentage of near-kin marriage is a bit higher than the 15% reported for the Malays in Galok, Kelantan [Kuchiba *et al.* 1979: 235], and much lower than the 42% for the Bugis descendants in Bukit Pegoh, Melaka [*loc. cit.*]. The divorce rate is also in between the Galok and the Bukit Pegoh cases. From Table 11, 24 males and 14 females experienced remarriage, that is, 23% and 13% respectively. The frequency of divorce is less than that of separation by death (Table 12). If we examine the marriage experience of divorcees (Table 13), the rate of divorce by frequency of marriage is 13.5% for males and 7.3% for females (Table 14). If we look at the figures from the perspective of the number of persons experiencing divorce, 18 males

Table 11 Marriage Frequency of Presently Married Couples

Husband	×	Wife	Number of cases
1st marriage		1st marriage	76
2nd marriage		1st marriage	12
1st marriage		2nd marriage	4
2nd marriage		2nd marriage	8
1st marriage		3rd marriage	1
2nd marriage		3rd marriage	1
3rd marriage		1st marriage	2
5th marriage		1st marriage	1
			105

Table 12 Frequency of Divorce

	Divorce	Separation by death	Total
Males (24)	13	16	29
Females (13)	7	9	16

Table 13 Marriage Frequency of Those Presently without Spouses

	Male			Female		
	Persons	Divorce	by death	Persons	Divorce	by death
1 marriages	5	2	3	21	3	18
2 marriages	1	2	0	3	1	5
3 marriages	1	2	1	1	0	3
Total	7	6	4	25	4	26

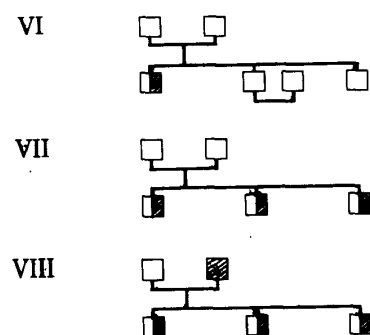
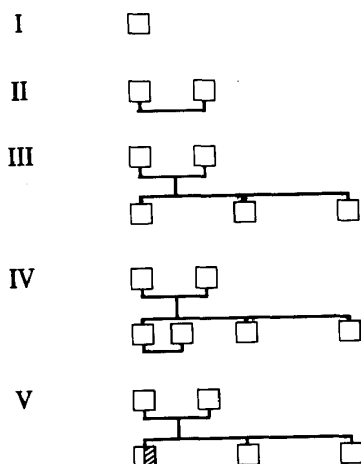
Table 14 Total Frequencies of Marriage and Divorce

Male	141 marriages	19 divorces
Female	150 marriages	11 divorces

Table 15 Household Composition by Stage

		I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	Total
Number of households		4	4	27	7	27	18	11	5	103
Additional members	Model composition	1	3	19	2	6	3	5	3	42
	Adopted children		1				2		2	5
	One spouse's children			1						1
	Grandchildren					4	3	6		13
	Great grandchildren						2			2
	Collateral relative	3		1			2	1		7
Missing members	One spouse			2	2	8	7			19
	Unmarried children			4	1	10	5			20
	Adopted children			3	1	2				6

Legend:



— marriage
 — siblings
 | filiation
 □ male or female
 ■ married child living in a separate household
 ▨ deceased

experienced divorce out of 112 ever-married males, and 10 out of 130 females, that is, 16% and 8% respectively.

The tendency for out-migration can be estimated from household composition (Table 15). There are 26 cases of the migration of unmarried children, including adopted ones, in Stages III to VI. The children of 30 households in these stages remained in the village. On the other hand 15 households take in grandchildren or great grandchildren later, in stages of V, VI and VII, their parents being away from the village. Only 14 households in these stages do not have any additional household members. In one sense these figures do not produce a total image of migration because the Table does not give any information about households experiencing out-migration. To complement the image, we can examine sibling sets, although, again, we cannot completely trace those siblings who do not have relatives left in the village. As a sample I selected independent sibling sets who were born in Sg Karang and one of whom at least lives in Sg Karang. In addition some sets of children are included to supplement the above mentioned shortage of analysis, if they comprise grown-up children and their parents still live in the village. Step siblings are counted as one set. Dead siblings are not included. We have 130 sibling sets. Five cases are individuals without another sibling. Thirty-three cases are children's sets. Eight cases of children's sets do not have any member in the village, that is, all of them, married or unmarried, emigrated. The total number of siblings is 658 of which only 131 live in the village, that is, 20%. Another 25 live within the Mukim. Sixty-two persons migrated to FELDA (Federal Land Development Authority) schemes in Kota Tinggi, Keluang, Mersing or Kahang. Forty-three obtained jobs in various factories, living in Pasir Gudang, Pekan Nanas, Pontian, and so on. The rest, that is, some 61%, migrated to other urban or rural areas, seeking various types of employment or marrying out. Since the average set of siblings consists of five persons, it is a striking coincidence that one of them remained in the village while the others migrated, as shown in the percentage (20%) of remaining siblings. Although we are discussing averages, nevertheless the figure indicates that the village's population of 'natives' does not increase.

Most cases of immigration are through marriage with a villager (see Table 10). But some are returnees, for example, SP 22 was born in Tg Balai, Karimun, but his father was born in Sg Karang. There are two men from Benut who bought the land in Sg Karang and moved in without having kin in the village. SP 25 was taken to Pulau Kijang from Benut and then migrated to Singapore, then to Sg Karang, thanks to his acquaintance with migrants from this village to Pulau Kijang. His wife is from Benut, too. In 1983 he bought a piece of coconut-palm estate here. Through him, another man from Benut, SP 29, bought a piece of land, much cheaper than in Benut, although he found out that it was priced higher than the usual selling price in Sg Karang.

There are temporary residents from the Indonesian side. Some are 'relatives' of a villager or acquaintances made during migratory work, like SP 22 above, although he himself is a Malaysian. They may get jobs like rubber tapping or working on the estate from villagers, ex-villagers or Chinese owners. Their wages are said to be cheaper than for Malaysians. Two new arrivals of the Buton are engaged in cutting out mangrove trees for a Buton businessman. Most new arrivals hide themselves away from the main roads, until they move out again to another place or

successfully assimilate as villagers. SK 32 from Tg Balai, Karimun, was adopted by SK 32a and married his adopted mother's sister's daughter. SK 32 is hired as a caretaker in a seven-acre oil-palm estate owned by a Chinese outsider. SK 27, born in Sg Terap, near Pulau Kijang, and married to a Bone woman, came back from Pulau Kijang to Sg Karang to take over a rubber plot of four acres inherited from his mother, a Wajorese. He has two brothers in Pulau Kijang, one in Pasir Gudang and a sister in Johor Bahru. His family experienced difficulty in obtaining Malaysian citizenship, and the education of children was deferred for a while.

Although we do not have any reliable statistics about those migrating out, there are 12 houses left empty in Kawasan I. These are the houses of people who departed from the village within the last ten years. Two went to Pontian, three to Pekan Nanas, two to Gelang Patah, two to Penerok, and one to Telok Kerang. Two other houses were owned by Chinese who left for Batu Pahat and Rambah. A Bugis couple, SP 7, live in a cosy house in Sg Punai. Their children live in another new house in Pekan Nanas. The land on which the house is built belongs to the wife's sister's son living in Pekan Nanas. The husband owns 4.5 acres of old rubber trees but works for wages on land belonging to a Chinese. This is a case that moving is imminent. On the other hand, some people have a house built to come back to after their retirement. SK 23, who lives in Singapore, had his house built in 1986, and a new house for SK 35a, a driver in Pontian, is under construction. Both of them have claims to the land of the house sites.

IV Dissociative or Schizogenetic Development

Diplomatic manoeuvring among the British, Malay and European powers resulted in the establishment of the state of Johor under a Sultan. In the case of Johor, its administration in the style of a European state was started rather early as seen by the fact that the constitution was conferred in 1895, although Johor was one of the unfederated Malay States. The penghulu system was reorganized since the turn of the century, and penghulu were incorporated into the administration as salaried bureaucrats (see Ibrahim [1951] for a modern guide for penghulu).

As the appointment of penghulu through a *tauliah* (letter of appointment) only began in 1899, it can be seen that land reclamation in Sg Karang was started much earlier by the Bugis who, it is said, came with a big ship from Singapore under the leadership of Wak Bambang Daeng Marulak, alias Wak Bambang bin Samerulah alias Hj Bambang bin Bambang. Before Singapore, he had been in Tg Batu of Kundur, and Guntung in Karimun. It is also said that he came together with a Malay and a Wajorese but this is refuted by the core kin circle. He passed away in 1914 at an advanced age of more than 90 years old. His son, Hj Md Sah, received a *tauliah* in 1922 and died in 1946 in Tg Balai, while the last of Hj Bambang's brothers, Hj Payoh, died in 1932 at Tg Pinang, Pulau Bintan. It is believed that the former left some 100 acres of land and the latter, 200 acres, but no descendants enjoy their prosperity in Sg Karang now.

The influence of the world economy via Singapore has changed local agricultural production structures which began with gutta percha, then changed to pepper and gambir, then to rubber and finally to oil palm, while pineapple has also been a rather important item in the twentieth century.

Kirby reports about Johor in 1926: another growing industry is 'pineapple canning': the industry, which started to flourish before the war, was nearly killed by the embargo placed by Great Britain on the import of canned pines in the latter part of the war, but it has made a remarkable recovery, and Chinese-owned canning factories are spinning up all over the country like mushrooms [Kirby 1928: 247]. In fact it is said that earlier settlers without capital were given pineapple seeds by Chinese pioneers in the upper river, thus ensuring that the products would go to them. (See Halimah [1981] for Bugis contributions to the development in Pontian; Shaharil [1986] for the socio-economic changes in Batu Pahat before the World War II.)

After the Enactment of Land in 1910, there remain several letters concerning the application for state lands by the Bugis at Mukim Sg Karang in 1913 and 1914 [C.L.M. 265/13, 460/13, 333/14, 434/14, 440/14, 679/14]. Each person applied for five acres and 54 persons filed applications for 61 lots of land in seven groups. Sg Karang, Simpang Kiri and Sg Boh are mentioned as places to be opened up. Most of the applicants' names are no longer recognized by the present senior residents. Some names are remembered but most of their descendants do not live in the Mukim any more. Of course, these documents are fragments out of a supposedly greater number of applications, yet from them we can surmise the state of mobility of the 'peasantry'.

Cancellation of land claims owing to non-payment of the land tax often occurred especially in times when rubber price was depressed. This was also caused by the out-migrations of residents who sought a better living in the islands and other places. The C.L.R. files from 1934 to 1938 contain many applications for cancelled land in Sg Karang by the relatives of out-migrants. During the Japanese occupation it appears that many villagers fled to Karimun, Kundur and Indragiri, places which are supposed to be stopovers for the Bugis migrants.

After the population returned, the depression from 1959 onwards again spurred villagers to seek land in early FELDA schemes of Endau or Mersing and, later on, in other schemes. At that time one acre of land in Sg Karang sold for \$200 or \$250. During the planning stage or the construction stage of roads there were many land transactions: \$400 per acre was the standard value in the 1970's, \$1,000 to \$1,500 from 1979 to 1982 and \$4,500 in 1987. Much higher prices are rumoured, depending on the location and condition of the land. In 1988, prices were \$1,000 to \$2,000 for an acre of uncleared land, \$7,000 to \$8,000 for a rubber plot, \$13,000 for a four-year old oil-palm lot or \$15,000, if the oil palms are more than four years old.

During the Emergency some Indonesian infiltrators were chased from the outside and killed in the Mukim. The government files record visits of bureaucrats, conflicts with the Orang Asli, the building of schools and mosques, and road repairs concerning the Mukim. It is said that the Emergency did not much affect the life of the Chinese in this area, because, villagers claim, the ethnic relations were quite amicable. In the 1950's a Chinese resident trader in Peradin controlled or monopolized trade with the Orang Seletar who lived along the mouth of the Redan River in the Mukim. The Seletar do not settle there any more, although some fishing boats appear on the littoral. There is no more trouble between the Bugis and the Seletar over fishing in the rivers.

The Ayer Masin Malay Reservation was gazetted in 1951, an area of some 4,350 acres. Kawasan I is on the edge of the Reservation, but a villager may register his land in the Reservation

as non-reserved land, and therefore saleable to non-Malays, if he is prepared to pay the extra land tax, for example, \$6 against \$3 per acre for rubber land and \$8 against \$5 for oil-palm. According to an informant, two thirds of the land in Sg Karang is owned by Chinese. Map 6 indicates the Chinese-owned lots along the main road in Kawasan I. There are mangrove forests towards the east of the main road and the Malay Reservation on the west side (see Map 5 also).

In 1956 a plan was conceived to make a breakwater along the coast to hinder the onslaught of sea water over the fields and inhibit erosion of the seashore. This plan progressed further in 1959 when a man from Rambah became an Assistant District Officer in Pontian. After surveying and a visit by the World Bank mission, the plan was implemented along with the First Malaysia Plan in 1965. The breakwater assured the use of land in the area of cultivation but it changed the water balance of the peat soil and interfered with fishing activities. So the plan to build a breakwater on the side of the Pulau River was rejected by villagers, most of whom were engaged in shrimp-catching in the mangrove forest riverines.

In 1970 the Minister of Finance visited Pontian and thereafter a major project for the development of West Johor was initiated. The Western Johor Integrated Agriculture Development Project (Rancangan Pembangunan Pertanian Bersepadu) was planned as a 30-year project (1974–2003), dividing the area (a total of 148,517 ha, with 63,266 ha of mostly deep peat soil) into three stages: Block 1 Pontian, Block 2 Muar and Johor Bahru Selatan, and Block 3 Batu Pahat. The Pontian Block was completed in 1989 and has now entered the period of maintainance and repair. Within the Mukim the *parit* (canals) and roads were newly constructed or rebuilt on a larger scale under this project. It also gave many individuals in the Mukim extra income opportunities by becoming contractors or laborers. Indirect effects of the project are seen in job-hunting patterns, life styles, housing and so on. Public electricity and piped water will facilitate the convenience of villagers. At the end of my field work those supplies did not reach users yet in Kawasan I. People obtain water, although containing organic, by digging wells one meter deep. Most of the households subscribe to an electric power distribution system from private-owned generators, 13 in this Kawasan, as TV viewing is a necessity these days. Public telephone booths are installed in Kawasan II and III but not in I. Regular bus services are provided up to a station just outside the boundary of the Mukim by the Maju Transportation Company (under the Johor State Development Corporation).

From the early days of settlement, settlers do not seem to have engaged in subsistence agriculture: fish and shrimps were rich in supply and vegetables could be obtained from the forests; only the rice, salt, onion and tamarind had to be purchased. It was reported that the chief imports in 1926 in Johor were rice from Siam, opium from China and tobacco from the Dutch East Indies [Kirby 1928: 248]. There are some sago trees seen around Sg Karang, but the villagers say that even sago had to be purchased from outside, from Karimun before the War. Only bananas and some vegetables were planted. At present a group farming system has been introduced under the guidance of the agricultural field assistant in Belokok. Fifteen farmers work together on 20 acres of land, planting tomato, chili and so on, for sales. Some other villagers work in the tomato fields of the Chinese.

The first generation of Bugis settlers opened up the uncultivated land as extensively as their resources allowed them. In the second generation some expanded their land holdings by buying and selling. Some obtained up to 100 or 200 acres. At the same time others migrated out, owing to the depression or wars, and opened up new lands. Conversely the out-migrants sometimes returned or new comers or relatives came to settle here, if the situation seemed beneficial to them. Many of the third generation tended to move out to areas where their relatives had already settled or to urban areas seeking jobs. Once they sold their land in Sg Karang, as happened in the 1970's and 80's when land was transacted with the Chinese, they never returned again. It is symbolic that the sixth penghulu resided in Pekan Nanas during his office and that the seventh and present penghulu has never lived in the Mukim. They made inspection trips in order to maintain contact with the villagers for the execution of official business but the villagers had to go to their houses in order to obtain signatures, letters and necessary documents from the penghulu. The percentage of absentee land owners increased. This is true not only for the Bugis but also for the Chinese. Many original Chinese settlers moved to town. One Chinese who still lives with his family in Kg Buloh Kasap has purchased a house in Johor Bahru, and is ready to move out. Another Chinese couple fulfil the role of 'resident manager' for the husband's father's estate containing oil palm, poultry and shrimp nursery. The latter and his other sons live in Kukup.

It seems that the former villagers polarized into rich out-migrants and relatively poor residents who rely on agricultural labor and fishing for their economic survival. The chairmen of UMNO (United Malays National Organization) branches at the kampung level are former residents who now live in nearby towns. Products from commercial crops like pineapple, rubber, coconut palm and oil palm, or from fishing have been mainly exported to Singapore largely through the agency of Chinese middlemen. As land is not used for subsistence agriculture, it is reclaimed for its value as a commodity. Before and after the construction of laterite roads under the Western Johore Agricultural Development Project, land was transacted as an object of investment. The ownership of land itself is not the aim of the Bugis: land to them is only important for its money-making potential. Even cultivated land is often transacted. In this way, the plantation economy has dominated the thinking of these smallholders. Owner-residents disperse and laborers come in. This is the current situation in Sg Karang.

V Ethnicity and Integration

The erratic nature or flexibility especially in the definition of Malay ethnicity is well known. The Bugis and the Javanese are different from the Malay in terms of native language. But once the former migrated into the Malay Peninsula their separate ethnic identity disappears and they merge into the Malay category. One reason for tendency to merge is that, if one claims to be a non-Malay, one does not have access to the many privileges given to the Malays or, worse, one is treated as a 'foreigner' who will experience many economic and political disadvantages within the framework of the nation-state Malaysia. Another reason is the sharing of a basic 'Malay' culture among peoples of the archipelago. Their ethnic differences are derived from the different emphases

in the marshalling of ideological systems formulated through language, kinship, religion, polity and economy, like the differences in degrees of acceptance of Hinduism or Islam. But they share basic organizing principles such as interactional characteristics [Maeda 1989] and their languages share a basic grammar and similar vocabularies. If they decide to subscribe to another marshalling symbol system, they can easily transform themselves. In this frontier case the main thing that changed in the identity of the migrants was their affiliation within the political sphere, namely they moved from Indonesia to Malaysia. In many British documents the Javanese tend to be distinguished from other Malays. The reason is that the Javanese population was relatively large, but one can also argue that the Javanese culture system is more persistent than, for example, the Bugis one in frontier situations.

It is rather dubious to depict changes in migrant cultures using a mere comparison with their original culture, unless the study includes a focus on the assimilation process to the dominant culture. We know the present situation of migrants. But the apparent difference between their present culture and the original one could be due to a mere variation in the latter. The informants can tell us about situations they experienced in the past or that they heard about from parents. But those constructions should be compared, not with the present culture of their place of origin in general, but with its past tradition in the particular location from which their family members migrated. The changes and influences suffered during migration must also be taken into account. For example, people who migrated from a village in Wajo may have contact with Bugis from other areas and other ethnic groups and may change their habits or customs on the way to Johor. In Sg Karang generational differences are significant as well as the gradual adaptation to socio-economic changes occurring in the Peninsula as a whole. We need to note also changes in the original village in South Sulawesi during the same time period. Life in this village is an embodiment of Bugis culture in general but it manifests its own variant of customs and habits which may be different from those of other Bugis communities. We are not able to know the total image of original situations when the migrants departed from their place of origin. The difference between a variation and a temporal change should be analytically separated. Often a variation is confused with a temporal change.

In South Sulawesi there is a famous, widely known epic called *Surek Galigo*, the hero of which is Sawerigading [see M. Salim 1988]. I did not expect that the epic would still be told in the village. Only one villager was able to give me a brief outline of the story as follows :

Once upon a time a senile couple asked God for a child and they were given twins, a boy and a girl, Sawerigading and Tenriabeng. (There are no detailed stories told of the beginning of the world, the descent of Batara Guru, and so on.) The old couple prepared a feast but, as invited guests did not turn up, they threw the food into the river. Heaven lamented this deed. They lived in *salassa Luwu'* (a Luwu style palace) which has seventy rooms. Tenriabeng was raised in the interior and Sawerigading in the front: they were prohibited to see each other. One day Sawerigading was chasing a fighting cock and happened to see the face of Tenriabeng. He longed for her and fell ill. He was not persuaded by his parents that she was his twin sister. Finally he

accepted the Tenriabeng's suggestion that he look for a cousin exactly similar to her living in Cina. He ordered a ship built from the *welenreng* tree but nobody could chop the tree trunk. Only Sawerigading could cut it with his axe. After the construction of the ship he sailed for Cina. On the way he fought seven wars. (He passed through Tanjung Piai, the southernmost tip of Southwestern Johor.) At last he was able to meet I Codai, the cousin, and he believed his sister because the cover of a box Tenriabeng gave him fitted well with the box I Codai had. However, over the issue of a sacred cloth (*kain sakti*), Sawerigading made war with Cina. After his victory, he married I Codai. But he could not resist the idea to return, and he sailed for home. Because of his vow with his sister, the ship sank on the way.

The person who told this story, SP 1, was born at Peradin in 1928 of a Wajo father and a Bone mother. His father migrated out from Kg Bau, Timpa-Timpa, Wajo, just before the Dutch extended their control over Bone. After his arrival in Singapore, he went to Sg Duku along the Pulai River. SP 1 learned this story not from his father but from a Bugis in another village. He does not seem to know the early part of the story and in fact he did not know the name, Patotoe, the Creator. However, he appears to know the details of Sawerigading's voyage and marriage strategies, a portion of the epic cycle called '*Tereng sompe'na Sawerigading*'. His story can be traced back to a variant of the Sawerigading epic cycle spread in South Sulawesi. Yet from this story we cannot estimate the particular course of transformation of the variation. As in many parts of South Sulawesi nowadays in the village Surek Galigo is not used for ritual and it seems that nobody can recite it by heart. It is only remembered as a story by a Bugis-minded person and most of the other villagers seem to be not particularly interested in it.

A significant news appeared in the newspaper during my field work: An association of Johoreans of Javanese descent (Persaturan Anak-Anak Jawa Johor) was formed "to contribute to the strength of Umno in Johore through the unity of the Javanese" (*The New Straits Times* 31, Jan. 1989).⁴⁾ The item reported that Javanese descendants form 70% of the Malays in Johor and that "it was not wrong to form the association as there was already an association of Johoreans of Bugis descent." The Bugis association mentioned may be the one established in the 1970's in Benut where villagers claim that Bugis traditions are still retained, especially in Parit Mengkuasang, Parit Jabir, and Sanglang. In fact in the early 1930's it was already stated that the head of the Bugis "for the whole Malaya," an Embo Tua bin Daing Marewa, resided in Benut [Shaharil 1986: 82]. We do not know whether Sg Karang was under his leadership in the 1930's or not, but the villagers do not have any membership in the present association in Benut. Does this mean that the Sg Karang Bugis do not feel the need for a separate ethnic identity or that they are not interested in an activity which does not bring visible profit? On the other hand, many people are interested in hearing news about the present situation in South Sulawesi and are eager to listen to Bugis music cassettes.

From the fragmentary information gathered from villagers, a turning point of change in various customs, at least in Kawasan I, can be discerned. This was the death in 1963 of the last surviving

4) Ikatan Bangsa Indonesia (Indonesian Association) was once formed from 1948 to 1957 [Sukiman 1981].

daughter, Waru, of Hj Bambang. She was one of the adat defenders (the others being A. Nyompa and Raja Baso, both of whom had already passed away). The details of ritual procedures and knowledge do not appear to have been handed down on the next generation. Similarly, two *sanro maraja*, great medicine-men, (BK 17 and SP 33) still survive in the village but without proper inheritors of their knowledge and ability. There are two traditional village midwives, as well as a government midwife stationed at a clinic in the village (SP 28). These traditionally oriented people limit their usual operations to the circle of kin, village or *kawasan*. Their names and activities are not well known even in Belokok, where the *penghulu* complex exists. It is, however, true that people from distant places come to seek help from the medicine-men: one old Javanese male from the next Mukim frequented BP 20, a midwife cum curer, for treatment. In this sense, a network of information that she can successfully treat difficult patients still exists and extends far from her ordinary sphere of operations. But the situation is not such that everybody knows her reputation; it is quite difficult to get information about traditional healers these days.

According to the villagers, there have been many changes in life-style. In the early days of the settlement Bugis style houses with a highly elevated floor were observed but, by the 1950's, only three houses with the traditional layered covers at gables were built. Until this time also people constructed the platform extending from the front part of the house to entertain guests for wedding ceremonies. Presently houses are not raised so high, only 50 to 100 cm above the ground, and some do not use piles at all, being built on a cement slab on the ground. The floors of Chinese houses in the village are elevated as high as 50 cm or less, and are not built on the ground.

The *possi' bola* (center of a house) in Bugis, or *tiang seri* (main pillar) in Malay, seems to be still designated, and sometimes a censer, *addupaddupang*, is found on the floor beside the pillar. Members of older generations still know the ritual offerings and observances, for example, when a new house is built, using *minya' bau*, *dupa*, *benno'*, *sokko*, *rekko ota*, *oting*, *kaluku*, *tello* and so on, and not forgetting *manu* (fowl). *Ance'* (*ancak*, a ritual object plaited from palm leaves) used to be made to be kept in the attics and it is said that the Bone people even used to make traditional candles (*pesse pelleng*).

Although there is no mention of a *possi' tana'* (center of the earth or village), as in most villages in South Sulawesi now, the first landing place (*pemulaan* or *asaleng*) of Hj Bambang's party is still respected by his descendants. Based on a vow made with the late Hj Bambang, his descendants still conduct a ritual once every two years at the place. The time designated is in a certain Friday during the month of pilgrimage, that is, Zulhijah. (His tomb, which is situated three hundred meters away, is visited on Hari Raya Puasa, because it is believed that he is absent during the month of Zulhijah.) The landing site ritual is called '*mappalaka kampung*' and is said to be equivalent to the Malay '*bela kampung*', "to cleanse the kampong of any evil ghosts or supernatural threat to the inhabitants' health and prosperity" [Djamour 1959: 20]. The place is a tree planted thirty meters away from the present riverhead. In October, 1987 two plates were left at the bottom of the tree, but it was explained that they were offered by a Chinese. In fact the lot where the *pemulaan* exists no longer belongs to the descendants but to a Chinese. The cemetery nearby (2.5 acres) is a *wakaf* (religious endowment) donated by a son of Hj Bambang.

Formerly a goat was killed on the spot. This was an indispensable part of the ritual prescribed in the vow. Since the practice was criticized as a kind of *semah* (animistic sacrifice against evil spirits), nowadays the goat is slaughtered at the Imam's house and the meat is brought to the place along with banana (*oting manurung*, or *pisang raja*), oil (*minya' bau*, or *minyak Mangkasar*), incense (*dupa*, or *kemenyan*), popped rice-grains (*benno'*, or *berteh*), cooked rice (*sokko*, or *nasi ketan*) and so on. While Waru was still active until the late 1950's, she officiated in the ritual of releasing into the river two *wala suji* (a bamboo frame for offerings) with *ance'*, one for the tiger spirit and another for the crocodile. After she died there is nobody who could make the *wala suji*. Husin, the successor of Waru for officiating at the ritual, only casts *benno'* into the high tide of Sg Karang, burns incense, and then floats a piece of bettel-nut and an egg rubbed with oil on the water. Everybody then washes his face with river water. The tiger and crocodile are tutelaries (*penghuni* or *penunggu*). The person responsible for this ritual will hear roaring sounds from the river if it is not performed for a long time. In order to carry out the ritual he collects two to ten *ringgit* from each villager, three to four hundred *ringgit* in all. Out-migrants also contribute. An ambivalent attitude can be observed in the fact that a former *penghulu*, a grandson of Hj Bambang, is said not to have participated in the ritual, at least during his *penghuluship*. Not all of the villagers or descendants believe in the efficacy of the ritual but they hesitate to abandon the beliefs and practices while there remain some believers: fishermen in boats drop tobacco ash on the river, asking pardon and saying that they, the children and grandchildren, only come to seek a livelihood. One person in Peradin, some 60 years old, is believed to have been born together with a baby crocodile which had five fingers, and the baby crocodile was released into the river after being breastfed for three weeks.

An example in which a Bugis tradition unconsciously transforms its content is a device to ascertain the time for journeys, major works and so on. These devices are called '*kotika*' in Sulawesi, but here are called as '*langkah*', presumably a Malay word. One lady preciously keeps a *kotika* board inherited from Hj Bambang, but she does not use it and adopts her own style of devinations. The method used is a mixture from various sources.

There are many other cultural aspects which villagers consider as changes, concerning marriage, child-birth, circumcision and funerals, but I would not mention them here, mainly because it is quite difficult for me to distinguish Bugis customs from Malay ones, except for differences in ritual procedure or paraphernalia (see Halimah [1981: 126ff] for differences between Malay and Bugis customs). Those changes may be treated as just one case in local variations of Malay culture or its modernization. Moreover South Sulawesi has also suffered great changes in their observance of custom owing to the guerilla wars during the 1950's; customs have been modified or simplified since then. In the case of language, however, the process of Malayization is clear. In documents in the 1910's the villagers used Bugis personal names with La or Ambo at the beginning and with nasalization at the end, and some used '*daeng*' (*paddaengeng*, a status-designating title placed before a new personal name after marriage). It is reported that the characteristic Javanese names seem to fade out with the original immigrants and that the local born bear standard Muslim names [Ramsay 1956: 122]. In the 1950's some petitions were signed in Bugis letters. But nowadays many of their names are taken from Muslim names without using La, and Bugis-like names are targets for

jokes. They can read Jawi scripts but only a few seem to be familiar with Bugis ones. Those above forty or fifty years old converse in Bugis at home and among themselves, but children, especially schooled longer, usually speak in Malay even at home, losing the chance to learn Bugis.

On the surface things local, Bugis in this case, have been disappearing, and uniformism and conformism to a system dominate: administrative control, political mobilization, religious commitment, market economy and national language. The underlying persistence to Bugis ethnicity very much, but the Bugis ethnicity itself seems not so important. Rather it tends to identify as a local claim to be a variation of Malay culture, and the Bugis customs are merely regarded as traditional in the spectrum of it against modernization. Some people keep Bugis cloths as a memory of the ancestors, but no one wears a sarong of Bugis style.

In contrast to the rather easy merging mentioned above, the persistence of the Chinese ethnicity is notable. Many Chinese who have daily economic relations with Malay may master the *pasar* Malay. But, if socially allowed to live separately from the Malays, even a village-born Chinese seems to refuse to speak reasonable *pasar* Malay. The children also attend to a Chinese school and there is little communication between the Chinese family and other villagers in this particular case. Some Malay contractors are quite good at speaking Chinese accented *pasar* Malay, though. In some cases, economic relations between Chinese and Malays are much stronger and more important than those among Malays. Islam as an ideological system forces the Muslim Malays to be distinguished from the non-Muslim Chinese, while the Chinese would not be willing to subscribe to the Malay or Malaysian system as it is. More significantly, the basic culture of the Chinese is more different in degree than the differences between the Malays, Bugis and Javanese [see Tan 1988].

VI Conclusion

In the 19th century, Sg Karang was a local frontier in Johor, a frontier in the sense of a region of "wild, unclaimed land" which fronts onto another country, or one of "politically open areas nestling between organized societies but 'internal' to the larger regions in which they are found" [Kopytoff 1987: 9]. Its history, like Johor as a whole, shows a pattern of the influx of populations, after an initial core-group of migrants penetrated into the vacuum, encountering no conflicts with the autochthonous residents. In the 20th century, colonial and post-colonial development gave rise to further out-migration to towns, plantations and land schemes. In other words, there has been an incessant flux of people reflecting economic fluctuations in the national or international economy.

A relative indifference to permanent attachment to a particular place for economic production is conspicuous among the Bugis. For shrimp-fishing each fisherman has his own territory and villagers are conscious of land ownership and boundaries. But this is not attachment to a territory itself; rather it represents an interest in economic productivity of the land. Immigrants cleared the land, dug canals and grew commercial crops. If a better opportunity comes, however, they will take it even if it means transferring to another place or to another activity. They live with a spirit of freedom (*ade' ammaradekange*) and of migration (*ade' malleke dapureng*) (Hamid [1984: 69], the

Bugis terms being not elicited during my fieldwork in Sg Karang). This seems to contribute to the schizogenetic or dissociative development.

The sense of rootedness in physical space, although represented in the symbolism of 'original place' or central house-pillar, is mediated through kin circles and ancestors. A new habitat may become an original place for inhabitants and the center of their activity. Involution on the land is not expected. Development is always extraneous. The people came from outside and profits drain outside. Only agricultural laborers cum owners of a small lot stay in the village. Those who are better off live in towns, either controlling the land in the village or severing relations by selling the land. This said, it is important to note that the 'kampung' is not a locality but a social space mainly composed of a network of core kin circles, heterogenous elements being interstitially submerged in the social space. The concept of kampung and enforcing characters of kampung membership are only activated when the villagers needed to cooperate to open the land or protect themselves from infringement of their land by outsiders. Government 'intervention' through system of administration and development schemes changed the sense of community from a social space to a mere territoriality with formal boundaries.

According to an American social scientist, "Those people who were not politically dominant in the nation-states and who still had significant cultural markers of difference and sufficient social cleavages from the dominant political majority were 'ethnic' groups" [Nash 1989: 2]. The Chinese descendants in Malaysia are a classic example in this sense. But how about the Bugis? Are they not an ethnic group in the sense of minority? It is true that the concept of "ethnic groups" has been amplified in the present-day nation-state of Malaysia, although one may argue that the imposition of the strong categories of ethnicity or race in Malaysia may be traced back to the British imposition. But it is within the framework of the nation-state that tradition is conferred with meaningfulness. In discussing the non-Muslim Bugis in a Muslim Bugis community in South Sulawesi [Maeda 1984], I argued that the customs of the former are regarded as more authentic, traditional and Bugis-like. In a different context, the villagers of Kawasan I seem to be more traditionally oriented Bugis than those of Kawasan II or III, who are more assimilated into the Malay culture and who promote the Islamization of customs, although it seems impossible for all of them to imagine that there is a group of non-Muslim Bugis. Perhaps a Bugis custom may be a "significant cultural marker of difference" for its practitioners but that marker does not necessarily function to create a social cleavage between the dominant group of Malays and the Bugis of the immigrant past, who are largely regarded as *Melayu* in Malaysia. Bugis ethnicity is a refuge only for the older generation who can speak the language. The younger generation, especially those who migrated out to Malay dominant area or urban areas, have been completely assimilated into the so called 'Malay' group. For them there is no necessity to be Bugis. They have to invent their own tradition, similar to the standard Malay culture, whatever it is.

Ethnicity is a fabric constituted by different peoples to serve as a cultural boundary marker within the framework of a nation-state. If one adopts another frame of reference, then ethnicity may become a mere delusion; the tradition you subscribe to decides the authenticity of your identity. Like ethnicity, the land in Sg Karang is a phantom. The people are cultivating not solid

ground but peat, a thick layer of decayed plant material. Yet they can live on it. Socio-cultural integration may be a phantom also, but they can live within it. There is no doubt that, for them, it is more advantageous to be Malays, in so far as they remain within the framework of Malaysia. Nostalgia for the remote land of the Bugis sometimes sways the hearts of the people who know tales of the Bugis style of life from the first and second generation of immigrants, but that is all. The symbolic domination of Malayness is encouraged in Malaysia, if not compelled. So the Bugis have to share the ambiguity and uncertainty of the age together with the Malays.

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